DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 116 002 CE 005 906

AUTHOR Dowell, Judy H.; Greenwood, Bonnie B.
TITLE The Masculine Focus in Home Economics.
INSTITUTION Home Economics Education Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 1 Apr 75
NOTE 31p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; *Curriculum Development; *Home Economics Education; *Males; Secondary Education; *Student Characteristics; Student Interests; Student Needs

ABSTRACT

The publication explores what home economics has to offer young men and provides information useful in establishing or implementing a curriculum to meet the needs of today's adolescent male. The growing recognition that home economics at the secondary and middle school levels provides important knowledge, attitudes, and skills for the adolescent male is discussed. The existing barriers to male students' involvement in home economics classes are described and identified: community involvement, parental attitudes, peer attitudes, attitudes of school personnel, and teacher attitudes. Some general observations on understanding and teaching boys are presented. The need for considering the masculine self-image is also discussed. Detailed suggestions for curriculum development include methods of recruitment and ideas for adapting course content and activities to the needs of males in co-educational classes. Specific areas of the curriculum discussed are: child development, clothing and textiles, food and nutrition, housing and home management, personal development and family relations, and occupational home economics. The report concludes that the inclusion of males in the home economics curriculum is a forward step which requires teachers to become acquainted with male students' characteristics, needs, and attitudes in order to provide relevant and interesting instruction. (Author/MS)

**********
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
**********

ED116002

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

# The Masculine Focus in Home Economics

Written by
Judy H. Dowell
and
Bonnie B. Greenwood

School of Home Economics
Florida State University

for the
Home Economics Education Association
of the
National Education Association

CE 005 906

2/3

## TABLE OF CONTENTS


Introduction ..... 1

Background ..... 2
- Home Economics and Young Men ..... 2
- Why Home Economics for Young Men ..... 4
- Existing Barriers ..... 5
- Understanding and Teaching Boys ..... 9
- Masculine Image ..... 12

Plans for Action ..... 14
- Methods of Recruitment ..... 14
- Course Content ..... 16

The Inclusion of Males in the Home Economics Curriculum — How to Live With It and Like It ..... 26

# INTRODUCTION

Home Economics is a broad field of endeavor which emphasizes home and family life and harmonious living. It has something of value to offer people of all ages, both male and female. As the years have passed, the scope of home economics has been more clearly defined and considerable time and effort has been expended in making all people aware of what home economics has to offer them as individuals and as family members.

Young men have notably increased their visibility in home economics in the last decade. Teachers report ever-increasing numbers of them in co-educational semester courses such as family living, child development, consumer education, housing and home furnishings, and foods and nutrition. Many schools have reported highly favorable responses to "males only" classes. Often these classes have taken the form of (a) a comprehensive home economics class touching on nearly all subject matter areas or (b) a foods class. In some states, home economics has attracted a number of very enthusiastic learners by way of middle school-aged boys.

The purpose of this publication is to explore what home economics has to offer young men as well as to provide information that should be of some assistance in establishing and/or implementing a curriculum to meet the needs of today's adolescent male.

It is not the intention of the publication to focus so sharply on males as to lead readers to conclude that adolescent males and females share no common ground or to communicate a sexist point of view. Differences do exist, however, or teachers would not voice so strongly their

need for assistance and guidance in working with young men. Emphasis will be placed on characteristics frequently described by experienced teachers of male students, but this is in no way to suggest that female students may not exhibit similar traits.

# BACKGROUND

## HOME ECONOMICS AND YOUNG MEN

Men have been part of home economics from its conceptualization at Lake Placid, through the early years as a struggling profession, to the present time when a growing number of men can be counted as proud members of the home economics profession.

When the Smith- Hughes Act was passed in 1917, home economics became an integral part of vocational education at the secondary level. Unlike the other vocational subjects identified, home economics was designed to prepare students for homemaking rather than wage-earning activities. In 1917, the home economics classroom clientele was envisioned as strictly female. In fact, many said that home economics was included in this particular piece of legislation so that there would be some provision for the young women of the nation.

Thus home economics in the secondary schools has had a reputation as a female endeavor. On the other hand, the field of home economics has never been so narrowly defined. The family has been at the center of our activities, and home economists have taken pride in the unique ways they have applied the physical and social sciences and the arts for the purpose of serving families and improving family life.

There has been, in recent years, a growing recognition that home economics in the secondary schools has much to offer the young man of today. This recognition has been strengthened by the successes of a number of home economics teachers who over the years have experimented with home economics curricula for males and by the proposed regulations to implement Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 dealing with sex discrimination.

The growth of the middle school movement has also focused attention on what home economics can offer young men. The middle school curriculum typically provides an exploratory component of which home economics is usually a part. Most of these exploratory programs are operated on the basis of free choice by students with no regard to sex. Prevocational experiences, provided today in many middle schools and junior highs, have also served to introduce males to the home economics concept.

Naturally, emphasis on the multiple roles and the removal of sex barriers in terms of acceptable behavior and/or jobs for the sexes has been a great contributing factor. Society as a whole, as well as young men themselves, is more likely to accept the sharing of tasks and reject traditional stereotyping in regard to work both in and outside the home.

## WHY HOME ECONOMICS FOR YOUNG MEN?

What can males gain from home economics? Probably no less than their female counterparts. Adolescent males are participating family members, and most of them will establish families of their own. Naturally, not all will choose to marry. A number of young people, both male and female, will experience a period of single, independent

living even though they anticipate marriage in the future. Females, by tradition, are better prepared for this role, but home economics courses can assist males in assuming the same responsibilities.

Home economics has much to offer the adolescent male in the form of knowledge, attitudes, and skills useful to him both now and in the future. Everyone is a consumer. Men are just as interested in managing money wisely as are women. Many want to learn to prepare meals and snacks for themselves, and most are concerned with physical health and development. They would like to be able to make simple clothing repairs. Some have the desire to make clothing or accessory items for themselves. A number of young males enjoy relating to children and would like to know more about how they develop and grow. Nearly all want to make themselves more attractive to others not only in terms of appearance but in personal relations as well. Creating a pleasant environment in which to live and finding suitable housing is also of importance. In addition, home economics careers will appeal to many young men.

## EXISTING BARRIERS

If the study of home economics can contribute so much to the growth and development of young men and provide them with knowledge, attitudes and skills for the future, why aren't more of them enrolled in home economics classes? The reasons are many, and some degree of variation exists as to the specific barriers operating in a given situation. Some of the more common ones will be discussed.

**Community Environment.** Communities vary in terms of the prevailing attitudes regarding sex roles and appropriate behavior for adolescent males and females. In some communities, home economics is considered in-

appropriate for young men. Many teachers have found, however, that the form the class takes or even the title can greatly influence the acceptance or lack of it in a given situation. For example, a class in cooking may be labeled inappropriate by the community for male participation whereas "Bachelor Survival" may be readily accepted even though both courses are identical in terms of subject matter.

**Parental Attitudes.** Parents usually have a great deal of influence on the courses selected by their children. Some parents have a stereotyped image of male and female roles. In some cases, this will result in a negative influence on their sons regarding enrollment in home economics classes. There are also a number of parents who have a very limited perception of home economics. Although they might see the need for their sons to be educated in the areas of family life and consumer education, they do not see home economics as the source for such knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Concerted efforts in the area of public relations can do much to counteract this particular barrier.

**Peer Attitudes.** Anyone who has worked with adolescents in a school setting realizes there are prevailing peer attitudes that strongly influence adolescent behavior. Most teenagers do not want to do anything considered unacceptable by their friends. If home economics has a "female only" image, there is little chance of having a significant male enrollment until the image is changed within the peer group. Some teachers have reported success in this area by "packaging" their home economics classes in non-home economics wrappings. For example a course might be titled "Bachelors Only" rather than "Home Economics for Moderns". Other teachers have concentrated their efforts on winning over those adolescents recognized as being most influential in terms of peer at-

titudes. If a teacher has most of the varsity football players in her home economics classes, there is a good chance they will serve as a positive influence on other young men to enroll.

**Attitudes of School Personnel.** It is common to hear home economics teachers say that their efforts to make home economics courses available to males have been hindered by school administrators and/or guidance personnel. Sometimes these individuals are not fully aware of what home economics has to offer young men. In other instances, the course offering is misunderstood and misinterpreted to potential students. It is rather difficult for the home economics teacher with a class of adolescent males who are there because they were told they would eat everyday if they enrolled, or for the teacher with a class of young men who couldn't be scheduled into any other class at that particular time period. Teachers have found it invaluable to keep administrators and guidance personnel fully informed of the purpose, scope and objectives of a home economics class open to boys.

**Home Economics Teacher Attitudes.** The home economics teacher naturally has a great deal of influence in determining success or lack of success in home economics classes serving adolescent males. It is not at all uncommon to hear college home economics education students comment that they had never considered the possibility of teaching males. Many experienced teachers have similar feelings. Some teachers think they would not enjoy teaching them, and many others express feelings of uncertainty at such a prospect. It is not unusual for younger teachers to report difficulties in establishing the teacher role with a class of older adolescent males. At the same time, others describe the protective and supportive attitude shown by young men having a young home economics teacher.

Most teachers find that some reorientation is necessary when working with males. A small habit such as referring to the class as "girls" can quickly alienate a group of young men. Every good teacher knows that curriculum and course emphasis have to be tailored to a given group, and this is especially true in working with adolescent males. Having young men in home economics calls for a teacher who is flexible and willing to examine existing curriculum content, teaching methods and learning experiences for relevance and appeal to the male students enrolled.

What particular trouble spots should teachers be aware of in effectively working with young men? Kreutz (1965) questioned 579 home economics teachers who had taught adolescent males in an attempt to answer this question.[1] In general, she found that older teachers and those with more years of teaching experience reported more difficulties in the following areas:

1. Working with young men who had little interest in school.
2. Meeting the differences in background preparation of young men.
3. Incorporating the differences in interests and developmental levels of young men.

Younger teachers and those with fewer years of experience reported more difficulties in the areas of:

1. Selecting content and methods for classes in which young men were enrolled.
2. Discipline.
3. Getting depth in subject matter to interest young men.

---

[1]Kreutz, Shirley M. Teacher-Recognized Problems in Teaching Boys in Home Economics. 1965. Dissertation Abstracts 26:4620-4621.

## UNDERSTANDING AND TEACHING BOYS

Very little scientific research exists to document the differences teachers should expect when working with boys as compared to girls. However, nearly all home economics teachers of young men can express an opinion on the subject. Some general observations that seem to be consistent from teacher to teacher will be cited here.

**Activity Orientation.** Although all adolescents require a variety of activity-oriented learning experiences, most teachers find that this is especially true for adolescent males. They recommend more emphasis on activities which enable the students to learn the theory indirectly.

**Skill Orientation.** Most young men who enroll in home economics want to obtain some type of skills whether they be cooking skills or skill at decorating a bachelor apartment. It is important that they have the opportunity to develop and practice these skills in home economics. When adolescents are able to see that they are acquiring desired skills, they are more likely to be accepting of the theory that accompanies them.

**Scientific Orientation.** The limited research that does exist documents the fact that males are more likely to excell in science-oriented areas than are females, for whatever reason. Thus many home economics teachers find them more interested than females in the scientific principles applicable to home economics. Young men are also more likely to question the "whys" of things and demand the scientific explanation behind the practice or demonstration.

**Practical Orientation.** Adolescents, both male and female, tend to question subject matter in terms of its relevance and practicality for them. It is important for the home economics teacher to make young men aware of the relevance of the course content and be sure that the material presented does have practical application for the particular group of males enrolled.

**Competitive Orientation.** Most adolescent males are keen competitors and enjoy friendly competition with their peers both in and out of the classroom. They tend to be eager to compare the results of their work against established standards in order to judge how well their product measures up. They will often demand some judgement from the teacher as to which one of them has achieved at the highest level. Learning activities can be designed and selected to take maximum advantage of this characteristic through use of games, team competition, score cards for projects, etc.

**Basic Skill and Theory Orientation.** Teachers have found that many young men bring very little practical experience with them when they enroll in home economics. Teachers have learned this fact in interesting ways. They have discovered that males using a gelatin salad recipe do not know from experience that the water should be boiling water rather than hot water from the faucet. Who would consider a device such as a can opener when a pocket knife is readily accessible?

Whereas this lack of experience and knowledge can be considered a disadvantage, many teachers see it more as an advantage. They say young men have fewer "bad habits" and misconceptions to be corrected. Males may not be as keenly aware of "how mother does it" or "the way we always do it". Whether an advantage or disadvantage, the limited experience and knowledge of young men must be carefully considered as the teacher plans for instruction.

**Male Orientation.** Nearly all teachers who have worked with young men comment on the sensitivity males have to what was designed for them and what they perceive as being for "girls only". Many a teacher has found a particularly informative filmstrip or other teaching aid rejected by male students because they thought it was female oriented. It is often easy to be so impressed with the content of resource materials that the students to whom it is particularly directed is ignored. Unfortunately, there is not a great variety of resource materials in home economics geared for male students.

**Conducive Learning Environment.** What type of learning environment is most conducive for adolescent males? Some of the more successful teachers working with young men have found that a relaxed but structured approach works best. Adolescent males, perhaps more than females, tend to dislike a classroom in which they feel the teacher is "uptight" or too structured. An example might best illustrate this point.

> Janice Jones was teaching an "all male" semester course in home economics. Toward the end of the semester, the class began a unit in clothing. Janice decided that the fellows would enjoy an activity-oriented project and selected tie making as both suitable and appropriate. At the beginning of the project, the fellows showed some reluctance. A few students commented that they weren't sure they wanted to make a tie. Janice did not become defensive or show any irritation at their comments. She encouraged them in a friendly way as they started to work. As time passed she reacted in the same manner to comments to the effect that they would not want to wear their ties once they were completed. Finally the ties were completed. Janice was amused at the fellows' behavior. They gathered around the mirror to try on their ties and get a first hand look at their completed projects. The fellows were very proud of themselves and impressed with the professional look of their ties. Every fellow decided to wear his tie to the next class even though none were wearing shirts that could possibly be considered as coordinated with their ties.

By taking a relaxed but firm approach and humoring the students along, Janice was able to help them accomplish much more than would have resulted from a demanding and authoritarian approach. Although this is basically true for all students, teachers have found this to be even more crucial in working with young men.

Boys are likely to see the humor in a given situation and often find it difficult to relate to someone who doesn't. Therefore, the successful teacher of boys needs a good sense of humor to be able to enjoy and participate in the type of give and take typical among teenagers.

## MASCULINE IMAGE

A review of the characteristics of adolescent males reveals how important their peers are to them during this stage. The image which they portray to their friends, both male and female, is of vital importance in order to insure a satisfying self-concept. By giving some basic consideration to certain areas, as home economics teachers we can enhance their masculine "image" and at the same time provide them with the opportunity to learn in the home economics department.

Consideration should first be given to a male's concern for his "image" when the first co-educational course or courses are being formulated. Input from male students in the form of an advisory committee or perhaps a school survey determining the needs and desires of the males in regards to the home economics curriculum would be a helpful beginning. Realization by the students that their input will be a vital force in shaping the courses will insure them that it will be relevant to their particular needs.

The course title will help to "sell" home economics courses to students. The "bachelor" image has been a very popular one and yet, perhaps in some instances may be misleading since many times the rationale for the inclusion of males in the home economics curriculum is that they are family members with a variety of roles to play. Some of the popular titles have included "Bachelor Living", "Bachelor Survival", "Bachelor Know-How", "Single Living", and other catchy phrases. Some courses may deal with only one particular area of home economics such as "How to Survive in the Kitchen" or "Gourmet Foods". Other courses may be comprehensive in scope, such as "Family Living" and here it would be especially important that the title seem as appropriate for males as for females.

# PLANS FOR ACTION

Now that you have an understanding of the relevancy of home economics for boys and barriers which may exist in your school and community, some concrete proposals for implementation are in order. Hopefully the suggestions for curriculum development which follow will assist you in initiating a program which will meet the needs of the students.

## METHODS OF RECRUITMENT

Recruitment efforts may take a variety of forms. What is chosen by a department in terms of what to do to recruit male students may be based primarily on how the home economics courses for males originated in the first place. If the department is responding to expressed needs of males within the school, then recruitment procedures may be very simple. However, if the department initiates a course in which they must convince the male students of the course relevance, then recruitment will probably be the determining factor in the success of such a course. Being aware of barriers existing in your particular situation will be extremely helpful.

As mentioned earlier, one ingredient which may help recruitment efforts would be the inclusion of representative male students in the basic planning for the course. Here it would be wise to select males who are influential with a wide group of students. If we realize how important their peer group is, recruitment may simply mean convincing a few "key" persons who, in turn, will recruit the others.

Another important part of recruitment should be informing key groups about what home economics has to offer young men. These groups would include administrators, guidance counselors, curriculum personnel, and all faculty. It is important here to make sure that you are thorough in your approach to these groups so that they fully understand the scope of the courses, who may be included, types of activities involved, etc. Not enough can be said about the importance of this step in your recruitment procedures since each of these people will have an influence on the students' curriculum choices, either directly or indirectly. Since the inclusion of males in the home economics curriculum is a rather new idea, you may have some convincing to do as to the "need" for home economics courses rather than its likely appeal (in eating, for instance!).

Since parents also serve as an influential group in determining the curriculum choices of their children, communication to them concerning your offerings may include a letter describing the courses and what they include or perhaps an oral presentation at a parent-teacher meeting. Having the opportunity to meet parents personally and discuss offerings with them is many times an effective means of recruitment — especially if you are able to present yourself and your course well.

There are a variety of methods available to reach prospective male students in order to inform them about course offerings of special interest. Personal contact by the home economics faculty would be most beneficial to insure that the information they receive is accurate and complete. This personal contact may be in the form of a student assembly, visits to individual homerooms or perhaps requesting an invitation to speak to a class traditionally taken by most males, such as physical education.

If these methods of presentation are not possible, you might consider using the school's public address system to announce and explain course offerings available. A special written bulletin may also be useful in circulating information to all students; however, with this method you don't have the assurance that your materials will be read. Well done displays with appropriate photos may be a good alternative.

No matter what method of recruitment you may choose, it is important that you have someone available for questions that students or parents may have, particularly during course registration periods. One method may be to announce that someone will be available in the home economics department during the school day to answer any questions or to help determine curriculum choices for prospective students. This not only promotes good will among the students, parents and administrators but also allows the home economics department the opportunity to direct new students to appropriate home economics courses, taking into consideration their needs and interests.

## COURSE CONTENT

With the passage of the Sex Discrimination Act it has become necessary for all home economics courses which are federally funded to be co-educational. No longer are separate home economics courses for boys and girls considered appropriate, particularly in light of emphasis on the dual role. Rather, it is the responsibility of home economics teachers to help each student, male and female, realize the value of the study of home economics. By working together, students may gain an understanding of how the sexes can work together to create a positive home

environment and, at the same time, break down the possible sex stereotyping — after all, girls like and can paint and hammer while boys like and can make draperies. It seems logical that perhaps involving students together in courses related to the home provides a truer picture of family life and the many aspects which it entails.

Rather than trying to fit the male students into our traditional courses, it would seem more helpful to determine the roles the students will be filling and possible related problems involved and then determine what home economics has to offer in helping with this role preparation. The following pages include a variety of ideas and suggestions in the different areas of home economics which may be suitable for working with males in your classes. Certainly your own imagination will help to create the teaching-learning situation which will be most appropriate.

**Child Development.** Perhaps one of the most challenging areas with which to be involved in working with males in home economics is child development. Most certainly it is an area which is being recognized as more and more useful and necessary for males as well as females. As our lifestyles become more flexible and the opportunity to define individual roles becomes more acceptable, it has become increasingly important for everyone to learn to relate to children. The use of male models may help to make this point clearer — for example, inviting a male elementary teacher to speak to your class.

Whether a young male is able to recognize his probable future as a father or his desire to relate to children in other roles, child development can offer a great deal to those interested, including a number of pathways toward self-

understanding. One of the biggest obstacles is probably securing a group of males committed to the study of child development. If this unit serves as only a portion of the curriculum, it may not be as much of a problem. Nevertheless, it has been discovered that young men do respond favorably to the study of children once they have become involved. And this does seem to be the key — INVOLVEMENT. With this in mind, it will be important to arrange for direct contact with children, on a regular basis if possible. Arrangements may include a cooperative program with a nearby child care center or elementary school, or, if interest is sufficiently great, the students may enjoy a play school directed by the group for a short length of time. Male students usually find easy acceptance among young children — perhaps because they are predominantly involved with females as babysitters, teachers, etc. This acceptance by the children does a great deal in not only familiarizing the students with different age groups but also in enhancing their self-concepts. It is especially important that teachers strive to develop individuals who feel secure in their male roles and have the freedom to do the things which they enjoy rather than fitting some stereotype. This may, in turn, allow the students to consider babysitting or employment as a child care aide as possible jobs which have traditionally been considered female.

**Clothing and Textiles.** The area of clothing and textiles is becoming increasingly popular with males and this seems to be true for a variety of reasons. Developing sewing skills has provided these students with the ability to be fashion conscious, creative and yet, at the same time, economically minded. Their seemingly natural mechanical ability allows them to adjust easily to machine sewing and handling sewing equipment and yet, the meticulous hand work can be rather frustrating to them at times. With this in mind, it is important to consider carefully

sewing projects that are selected for class use and yet also maintain some flexibility in the choices available to students. Some possible suggestions, using knit or woven fabric, might include a tie, vest, chef's apron, Dashiki-style shirt and other simple-to-make projects. At some point they may eventually attempt to construct pants, shirts, etc. and there might possibly be some who would develop their skills to the point of simple tailoring projects. Regardless of the type of project selected, they will enjoy finding out how the machine works, and it would be a good idea to capitalize on their interest by teaching them the simple operation and maintenance of the machine.

One of the major advantages of working with male students in the area of clothing construction is the fact that, for the most part, they will come into the course with no knowledge or preconceived notions about sewing. As is true with some girls, you will not have to spend time "unlearning" them. This same advantage also works as a disadvantage at times as you recognize the constant supervision which is necessary in order to make sure that the students are developing a high level of skill.

As mentioned earlier, flexibility should be the key to determining the usefulness of this area. Since classes are co-educational, you may want to choose items which would be useful and enjoyable to both sexes such as book bags, simple vests, or perhaps learning how to individualize clothing items with braids, studs, embroidery, iron-on patches, etc. You may also have a group that is not interested in developing sewing skills, but there will still be a number of things that would be important to include in a unit of this type. Care of clothing would probably be a main concern, involving familiarity with textiles and how to care for each; laundry procedures such as sorting, equipment, supplies, etc.; clothing storage, and simple repairs. The relationship of these skills to clothing costs

may also be of interest to male students, as well as female students.

In the textile area male students may enjoy a more scientific look at fibers if you can arrange for the use of microscopes for purposes of identification, evaluation and simple testing procedures. Wardrobe planning is an important consideration as well. However, to develop interest, this may be a topic that would best be approached in reference to their future and careers. Discussions and activities dealing with how to select appropriate styles, colors, fabrics would be essential to wardrobe planning as well as the ability to coordinate different looks.

**Food and Nutrition.** One of the most enjoyable areas to teach male students in home economics is food and nutrition because most males are so highly motivated — particularly in the area of food preparation (and consumption!) One important decision to be made by the teacher is what concepts will be involved in such a unit and how best to include them. As with other areas, activity is many times the key to interest. While the preparation and eating of food will be strong factors in the success of such a course, other objectives should be kept in mind from the beginning — on the part of the teacher as well as the students. The study of food buying, the importance of nutrition, meal planning, proper use and care of equipment and other topics are all important for inclusion in most typical courses. Each of these areas could be included in conjunction with food activities. The study of nutrition may be more appealing by experimenting scientifically with foods; for example, studying the cell structure of different plant foods. Also keying nutrition to physical athletic performance would be helpful. Perhaps invite one of the school coaches who is knowledgeable about appropriate nutritional needs to your class. Camping foods

and general outdoor cooking are areas of high interest to males and add variety to a program. In a hunting community, students were delegated to assist a local hunter in skinning, cutting and packaging a deer for freezing, an activity they later used to advantage.

Of course, occupational courses such as those formulated to train food service workers would be handled somewhat differently since the approach would be geared more toward skills necessary to carry out a particular job. This will be discussed in more detail in a later section.

Remember that the student's basic knowledge of the kitchen may be limited. It is essential that the teacher be specific when covering kitchen equipment, cooking terms, and basic cooking techniques so that the males will have a firm working knowledge from which to base their experiences, and yet, many times if this detail is "overdone", students lose interest. Being able to apply this information on their own is essential; for instance, being able to interpret recipes as they are found in common cookbooks seems essential in order to be able to cook independently for ones' self. Building a personal recipe file might appeal to many of the students looking ahead to independence.

Entertaining and all that is involved in the process can be highly valuable for many males — not simply from the standpoint of what to prepare to eat, but also how to invite guests and make them feel comfortable and enjoy themselves. Perhaps if "manners" are seen as ways of helping put others at ease rather than learning the "proper" way to behave it will receive wider acceptance. For some, this can be an important lesson. Many times they are so accustomed to **being** entertained that they seem lost in the role of host.

**Housing and Home Management.** Certainly the study of housing and home management is of the utmost importance to both males and females but it may not command the interest which seems to come more naturally to other areas of home economics. Nevertheless, with the right type of advertising, along with the suggestion of its importance in an individual's immediate future, a course or unit in this area could be most worthwhile.

Resource persons may be particularly useful in this area in order to provide depth and interest. Relying on the students' natural interest in how things work and the mastery of skills involving housing will provide the framework for many exciting activities. For example learning how to refinish furniture, reupholster, and wallpaper are all skills which can be fun to learn by both males and females, and perhaps even profitable. A project which the students could really enjoy might involve redecorating or refurbishing a room in the school — perhaps the living area in the home economics department or the teachers' workroom. Not only could they apply their skills to something "concrete" but also gain visibility and recognition in the school, and to partake in a simulated experience in family living — that of male and female working together to achieve a common goal.

There are many persons willing to give their time to teach the students certain skills. Perhaps the manager of a local hardware store could demonstrate how to antique furniture and then help them with small projects they might bring from home. A local contractor could add insight into how a home is planned and built. Field trips would be useful in becoming familiar with housing situations in their own area.

The industrial arts teacher would be invaluable as a

resource person in such areas as small house repairs, electricity, woodwork etc. You might possibly consider a team-teaching approach for much of the course content.

Of course, it is important to keep the course content in perspective as you plan to insure that the students achieve a broad view of the many aspects of housing; for instance, how to select the appropriate type of housing based on individual lifestyles, floor planning and design, leases, selection of apartments, home construction including financing and other costs, how to furnish a home and buymanship guides for selecting furniture, care of furnishings, and of course, decorating the home uniquely for the individual. Each segment of the course can rely on individual activities carried out by the student. If a unit on housing falls within a comprehensive course, it is important to be selective in terms of the experiences available to the students and the concepts which might be most relevant to their immediate needs. With a semester course in housing, the options available increase greatly, allowing for depth and variety as well.

**Personal Development and Family Relationships.** Personal development may include a variety of topics from the very important decision-making process to grooming. This area can be of great value when experiences are directly related to the needs expressed by the students. Here it is essential that the lines of communication between teacher and student are open so that honest opinions are expressed as to real needs. Relevant topics dealing with family relationships and marriage can be beneficial as well as interesting. Coed classes have a definite advantage in the area of family relationships in that both become aware of values and attitudes the opposite sex has. Class discussions can be especially important! Major topics include, dating, understanding self, mate

selection, and beginning marriage. A sex education unit is often included, as well as single life, divorce, and single parenthood.

Some topics will take special handling in order to find acceptability by some students. For example, when considering dress and grooming, it might be helpful to approach this topic from the standpoint of our presentday desire for the expression of our individuality. This may include ragged jeans, long hair, mod jewelry, leather accessories, etc. Nevertheless, the importance of body cleanliness may strike a note upon which all could agree.

Another helpful approach to this area may include the consideration of grooming for job and career. While the students may be anxious to "do their own thing", they also need to recognize the importance of meeting the expectations of future employers as well.

Discussion of personal values, goals, and decision making can be especially valuable when related to decisions about their future. While they may have very concrete ideas about what they expect their future to hold for them materially, it is important to consider how they are going to obtain these things — in other words, a career. When viewed in this light, the relevancy of the concepts may be apparent. In making that all-important decision concerning the years following high school graduation, each student may find it helpful to interview a technician, a college graduate, or someone who accepted a job immediately following high school. Class reports on the rewards and the problems of each choice along with self-analysis of personal skills, goals and values help with this decision.

A unit on jobs a ıd careers can be full of information, much of which may be supplied by resource persons — a speaker from the employment bureau, the school guidance counselor, an English teacher, etc. Here it may be helpful to have the students role play finding a job by studying newspaper ads, filling out applications, writing letters and resumes, and even interviewing for a job. In a unit of this type, you might want to check and see what is being done in other areas so as not to overlap heavily. A section dealing with consumer education topics such as budgeting, credit, insurance, etc. would be a possible follow-up to a unit on the world of work and careers. Again, relevancy is the key to interest; for example, applying credit information to the purchase of a car.

**Occupational Home Economics.** Certainly an important aspect of the home economics curriculum includes those courses specifically designed to prepare students for employment. Males have found wide employability in many areas of home economics, particularly in food services. In addition, there is a need for tailors, assistants in interior design, housing managers, and a variety of other positions.

It is extremely important that these training programs be of high standards in order to meet the needs of business and industry. Acceptance of these programs by male students will be dependent upon a number of factors as discussed in the previous section on the "male image". Many times something as simple as a uniform may help interest students in a course — for example, male students in food services may wear chef hats and jackets or long aprons. Also males in child care services could have nice looking jackets while their female counterparts might wear attractive smocks as uniforms.

Many of the ideas discussed under the individual subject matter areas will be applicable to occupational courses taught in each of the areas. The wise teacher will develop a strong advertising program as well as some means of assessing students' ability to profit from such a program.

## THE INCLUSION OF MALES IN THE HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM — HOW TO LIVE WITH IT AND LIKE IT

Without a doubt the inclusion of males in the home economics curriculum is a step forward, giving new direction to teachers and offering new challenges to the students. Admittedly there are problems to be faced, just as there are with any innovation and yet the opportunities seem to easily outweigh any barriers or inconveniences. It is important that each teacher acquaint herself thoroughly with her male students — their characteristics, needs, attitudes, and backgrounds — thereby allowing herself to provide a home economics course which is relevant, up-to-date and interesting to them.